

SRM14064 6/22/2014

“The Perfect Ten: No Other Gods”
Deuteronomy 5:6-7

Attention: One of the songs I learned as a child was called "Just the Same Today"

Living in a world of rapidly changing moral standards, it is good to remember that God is the same, and because His nature is unchanged, there are Moral laws that remain unchanged as well.

Because we live in an ever changing world, in which people have come to decide what is right or wrong on what is socially acceptable and what emotionally feels good to them, even many Christians have changed what they believe to be right or wrong about God, marriage, money, & many other things.

But Jesus called people to follow Him with not only the emotions, but also the mind and will.

- The mind fixes upon truths in the Bible.
- The will fixes upon directives in the Bible.

In an effort to inform your mind and direct your will (and also move your emotions) in the next few weeks we will be considering the 10 Commandments. I learned them from reciting them in church. Some of our kids learned them in a song our kids choir

sang a few years back, “the Perfect Ten”. [Play song @ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNRzwn3UZ8Q>]

They are found in Ex. 20 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21. This time we will look at them as they appear in Deuteronomy 5. The first commandment is Deuteronomy 5:6-7 'I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 'You shall have no other gods before Me.

The “Perfect Ten” are laws about Love. The first is a law that gives you and me a personal God, and warning against the danger of serving other Gods.

1. The “Perfect Ten” are laws about Love.

A. The Decalogue tells us how to love God and people.

Jesus, asked about the greatest law, said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." Mark 12:30

The first four commandments: - Love for God.

- Isn't it enough to obey God or have Faith? No

Just as a cold body is a sign of death, so a cold heart for God a sign of Spiritual death.

Thomas Watson: "Many will say they love God, but will not suffer the loss of anything for Him."

"Love makes all our services acceptable ... It is not so much duty, as love for duty that God delights in."

Do you Love God? If you do, you will be looking for ways to demonstrate it.

B. "Didn't Jesus do away with the Law?"

In Matt. 5:17 he said he came not to destroy or abolish the law, but to fulfill it.

"Then why are certain laws no longer observed?"

- Because with Jesus Christ came a an understanding of the deeper principles in the law.

- In so doing, some law is seen as pointing forward to the Christ who has now come, or were part of civil law in the nation of Israel.

The Westminster Larger Catechism Q. 95 says, "Of what use is the moral law?" "The moral law is of use to all men, to inform them of the holy nature and will of God, and of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly; to convince them of their disability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives; to humble them

in the sense of their sin and misery, and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience."

So in the age of Grace, how shall we view the 10 Commandments? Some basic NT rules :

1. They are for the heart. They require more than outward actions, but inward affections.
- They forbid not only the act of sin, but the inclination as well.

2. The converse of each statement is to be assumed; e.g. "Don't murder" = "Preserve life"; "Honor parents" = "Don't dishonor them"

3. When a sin is forbidden, so is the occasion for it. e.g. Murder occasioned by anger, hatred.

4. The 10 Commandments are all connected: love for God is connected to love for man.

Jesus faulted the Pharisees for this: Mat 23:23 (NKJV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

5. Not only your own sin, but complicity in other's sin is forbidden. e.g. by not hindering them,

by aiding or provoking them, by consenting, by being poor examples to others.

6. Though we cannot, by our own strength, obey them all, yet by doing what we are able, the Lord has provided encouragement:

- He has promised to work them out in us: Ezekiel 36:26 (NKJV) I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

- Christ's perfect record is imputed by Grace.

- He that commands, also enables.

C. Some broader, basic things are given in the preface in v. 6 (ESV) "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

It has been discovered that the form of God's Covenant has the same pattern of Hittite suzerent treaties. In them, the basis on which the Commandments rest is 1st given. Here it is:

1. "I am the LORD", Yahweh, "I am", the source of all being and power.

2. "your God," He is a personal God, with a particular people to whom He makes promises.

3. "who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." He is the redeeming, Savior God.

trans: With all this as a basis, let's look at the 1st Commandment. It has 2 parts:

- You must have the LORD as your God.
- You must not have any other God.

2. The first commandment gives You and me a personal God:

'You shall have no other gods before Me.

It is, again, a law about Love. "You" is singular. Put your name in it!

God insists on exclusive Worship. Isa 45:22 (NKJV) "Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other."

Your God is to be the God of the Bible, not something else.

A. To have the LORD be your God calls for you to know and love Him.

- He made Himself known thru Jesus Christ.

B. To have the Lord be your God calls for you to choose Him. Knowing must come first.

C. To have the Lord be your God calls for you to fear, or reverence Him.

1. To have Him always in your desires.
2. To have sufficient awe and love of Him that you fear displeasing Him, even when you are in a secret place.

The West Cat. sums up this part in these words: [#104, p. 186] "What are the duties required in the first commandment?" "The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him."

trans: The first commandment gives You and me a personal God. It instructs us how to love Him, Also,

3. It is a law warning against the danger of serving other Gods.

Jesus' 3rd temptation, at possibly His weakest moment, was this one: Mat 4:9-10 (NKJV) "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

A. The West. Cat. sums it up this way: [#105 p. 188] "What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?" "The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, atheism, in denying or not having a God; idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of anything due to him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; self-love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part; vain credulity, unbelief, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair, incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments, hardness of heart, pride, presumption, carnal security, tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all

compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; making men the lords of our faith and conscience; slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us; and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.

In short, whatever is esteemed or loved, feared or served, delighted in or depended upon more than God, that is something we make a god of.

B. Some particular "other gods".

1. Things we tend to trust in:

- Riches: Prov 10:15 (NKJV) The rich man's wealth is his strong city"

Matthew 13:22 (NKJV) Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

- Health & strength: Jer 17:5 (ESV) Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD.

- Wisdom or knowledge: Jer 9:23 (ESV) Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches,

- Morality: "duty is to be used, not trusted in" Isa 64:6 (ESV) We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

These days we find even Christians consulting astrology or eastern religions.

An "other god" can even be drawn from Scripture, but with alterations made to "fit."

Any religious activity directed toward anything other than the God of the Bible is both meaningless & forbidden. 1 Cor 8:4 (ESV) Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "an idol has no real existence," and that "there is no God but one... 6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."

So "other gods" include things we tend to trust in and

2. Things we love more than God include:

- Possessions: Rich young ruler.
- Pleasures: 2 Tim 3:4 'lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God--'
- Eating, food: Phil 3:19 (HCSB) Their end is destruction; their god is their stomach; their glory is in their shame. They are focused on earthly things,
- A person: sweetheart or child.

All such misplaced Worship is sin.

Conc: Finally consider the last 2 words, "Before Me"

You cannot have any other God, but He will know it!

This is a sin that dares Him to His face, which He cannot and will not overlook.

Rom 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The "Perfect Ten are laws about Love.

The first commandment gives You and me a personal God.

It is a law warning against the danger of any other thing getting the trust, service, & devotion due to God alone.

"You shall have no other gods before me."

Can You and I say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

Action: Give thanks to God for God's love expressed in the blessing of these laws.

Thank Jesus for being your personal Lord and Savior

Make a list of the things you are tempted to trust in or serve more than God Himself. Repent of them, and ask Him to replace them.